

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 30, 2006. Claims 37 to 39 remain in the application. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 37 to 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The claims have been amended giving due consideration to the points noted in the Office Action. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112 rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 37 to 39 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,363,359 (Gronemeyer). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention relates to the purchase of consumables. According to the invention, a server stores consumable purchase results in correspondence to a user's login information, stores consumable use rates in correspondence to the login information, and stores a table that includes consumable purchase results in correspondence to services and a number of consumables to be purchased in correspondence to the services. Then, when the server receives login information from a data processing apparatus, a demand estimate of the consumable is made based on (a) a consumable use rate for a consumable used in a printer in correspondence to the received login information, and (b) a designated predetermined term. The server also receives information on a number of consumables to be purchased. Referring then to the table, a plurality of services are read including (a) services corresponding to the number of consumables to be purchased, and (b) services corresponding to the consumable purchase results corresponding to login information, where the services correspond to the consumable purchase results consumable type by consumable type (e.g., model by model). The estimated demand and the plurality of services are transmitted to the user, whereby the user can order at least one of the services.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 37 as amended is directed to a server that accepts login information provided by a data processing apparatus through a communication channel, the server comprising a memory unit, adapted

to store consumable purchase results in correspondence to login information, consumable use rates in correspondence to the login information, and a table that includes consumable purchase results in correspondence to services and a number of consumables to be purchased in correspondence to the services, a read unit, adapted to receive the login information from the data processing apparatus and to read the consumable purchase results corresponding to the received login information from the memory unit, a demand estimation unit, adapted to estimate, based on (a) the consumable use rate for a consumable used in a printer stored in the memory unit in correspondence to the received login information, and (b) a predetermined term designated by the data processing apparatus through the communication channel, a demand of the consumable within the predetermined term, a reception unit, adapted to receive, from the data processing apparatus through the communication channel, a number of consumables to be purchased that can be designated or changed in the data processing apparatus, a service read unit, adapted to refer to the table stored in the memory unit to read a plurality of services including (a) the services corresponding to the number of consumables received by the reception unit, and (b) the services corresponding to the consumable purchase results read by the read unit, wherein the service read unit reads the services corresponding to the consumable purchase results consumable type by consumable type, a transmission unit, adapted to transmit information on the demand of the consumable within the predetermined term estimated by the demand estimation unit and the plurality of services read by the service read unit to the data processing apparatus through the communication channel such that the information may be displayed in the data processing apparatus, and an order reception unit, adapted to receive from the data processing apparatus an order based on at least one service designated by a user from among the plurality of services transmitted by the transmission unit.

Claims 38 and 39 are directed to a method and a memory medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the server of Claim 37.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features

of a server (i) receiving a number of consumables to be purchased from a data processing apparatus that can be designated or changed in the data processing apparatus, (ii) estimating, based on (a) a consumable use rate for a consumable used in a printer in correspondence to received login information, and (b) a predetermined term designated by a data processing apparatus, a demand of the consumable within the predetermined term, and (iv) referring to a table that includes consumable purchase results in correspondence to services and a number of consumables to be purchased in correspondence to the services to read a plurality of services including (a) the services corresponding to the number of consumables to be purchased received from a data processing apparatus and (b) the services corresponding to the consumable purchase results corresponding to the login information, wherein the reads the services corresponding to the consumable purchase results consumable type by consumable type.

Gronemeyer is seen to disclose an online e-commerce system in which a user orders goods or services from a server. Gronemeyer recites that “the server may also maintain a history of past purchases, and also provide a listing of predicted needed items (e.g., consumables or devices assumed to be at the end of their duty cycle)”. (See column 6, lines 45-48.) Gronemeyer further recites that “rather than hiding the sentinel-collected information, the data is presented to a user of the client computer device for review”. (See column 4, lines 5-7.) Gronemeyer, however, fails to teach referring to a table that includes consumable purchase results in correspondence to services and a number of consumables to be purchased in correspondence to the services to read a plurality of services including (a) the services corresponding to the number of consumables to be purchased received from a data processing apparatus and (b) the services corresponding to the consumable purchase results corresponding to the login information, wherein the reads the services corresponding to the consumable purchase results consumable type by consumable type. In this regard, the Office Action admits at paragraph 7 that Gronemeyer fails to teach such a feature, but alleges that such a feature would be inherent in Gronemeyer and states that, as evidence of such inherency, “it is noted that the reference does teach determining services

offered for sale from both the number of consumables received and the consumable purchase results". The foregoing assertion is not, however, supported by any part of Gronemeyer and Applicant fails to see any such disclosure in the reference.

In view of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, Claims 37, 38 and 39 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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